

THE SPARK

"KEEP THE FIRES OF THE NATION BURNING"
(C. S. PARNELL)

Edited by ED. DALTON.

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O'CONNELL—REDMOND

In many respects we can trace a parallel between the present situation in Irish politics and the position towards O'Connell's declining years. Then as now we had two sections in what, for simplification sake, I will call the Nationalist camp. We had the O'Connellites, who trusted blindly in the acumen of their leader. He had "won" a "great reform", he had been largely associated with the passing of Catholic Emancipation. The fact that it had been necessary to agitate at all to secure religious liberty for the Catholics of Ireland is evidence of the stupid, wretched character of the British Empire at that time, too.

But it is without desire to deprive O'Connell of due credit for his efforts that I say his eloquence played but a very minor part when it came to convince the British authority of the advisability of granting Catholic Emancipation. It wasn't granted because England's hatred for Ireland or Ireland's religion had declined, nor because O'Connell had shown the British Parliament that it was an act of merest justice, in consonance with Christian teaching, to remove the barriers which prevented the people of Ireland worshipping the Almighty in the manner and after the fashion of their fathers, to which they had adhered throughout centuries of persecution. Oh, no! But because, despite persecution, the Celt was still alert and vigorous in Ireland, because O'Connell's eloquence had roused the manhood in him and nerved him to assert his rights, because, as the Duke of Wellington declared, it was either Catholic Emancipation or "civil war". Had the Catholic Emancipation movement been

merely a resolutioning one, or a "vote of implicit confidence" one, had there been no great wave of temperance throughout the land, had there been a lack of individual sense of responsibility, had there been an absence of that fine physique and martial bearing from the hosting thousands of men at O'Connell's meetings—there would have been no Emancipation, and England would have still continued to deny to the people of Ireland that right which every white nation save Russia and Serbia concedes to men, the right to worship God in what manner seems most acceptable to Him, and best adapted to the temperament of the worshippers.

Well and truly did O'Connell declare, "England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity", and his words were equally significant when he declared that he always examined his conscience whenever an English paper referred favourably to him. That was in pre-Emancipation days. Later, when the sweets of office were partaken of by his colleagues, and when age had cooled his ardour in the pursuit of National freedom, he was satisfied to be preferred by the English Press and by English politicians to those "dangerous and disloyal fanatics the Young Irelanders", who taught that Ireland loyal or disloyal to the British Empire was entitled to the rights of nationhood, and that those rights did not depend on the good will of an alien people, but on the earnest determination and self-reliance of the Irish people themselves.

Then as now, the men who preached Sinn Fein were denounced as cranks and soreheads. They included such men as Thomas Davis and John

Mitchel. To-day the traffickers in Ireland's honour invoke the names of Davis and Mitchel, and they tell us that they (the Perverts) are their successors; they are but the successors of those who incited mob passions against clean, earnest leaders in every age of the world, and the pity of it is that the earnest, sincere, self-effacing leaders are stoned, whilst the corrupt of heart and the cross-eyed of vision are exalted and incensed with votes of confidence loaded by themselves and discharged by the unfortunate people whose slavery is by each such vote the more encompassed.

If, instead of hearkening to the catch-cry raised against Davis and his colleagues, the Irish people had boldly adopted the teachings of Young Ireland, the "famine years" would have had a different tale to tell, and the past 70 years would not have been a record of decay and, excepting one or two brief intervals, a record of humiliation and shame.

To-day it may seem outside the zone of practical affairs to speak of famine in Ireland. But history moves in a circle more or less. John Redmond is not an O'Connell, nor is his "impregnable" Home Rule Bill to be regarded as the great achievement which its political uncle considers it. But this notwithstanding Mr. Redmond has the ear of the country through the survival of the unfittest of our Press. If any combination of circumstances should revive the danger of famine, see to it that the "policy" which starved to death millions of our people 67 years ago, is not acquiesced in by our generation, and that food raised in Ireland *must* be utilised for the benefit of Ireland primarily. If famine occurs here during the course of the war remember that the Turks cannot give practical effect to their compassion for us as they did in '47 when they sent us a cargo of wheat.

ED. DALTON.

AN AMERICAN LETTER.

A constant reader of THE SPARK has sent us the following extracts from a letter to hand from a friend in U.S.A. :—

"The English influence in the American Press has been hitherto dominant. All the New York papers, with the exception of Hearst's "New York American", have been rabidly English. Most of the editors are *English*. The "New York Times", "Tribune", "Herald", and "World" lead the Anglo-American pack. In New Orleans all the editors of the daily Press, with one exception, are Englishmen. The editorials are as bad as those of the old "Freeman".

American commercial interests have been badly hit by the English blockade of the Central Powers, and practically all export trade to Germany and her allies has ceased. The cotton growers, for instance, lost millions over last year's crop; three English seizures of American shipments and high shipping rates, insurance, etc., have held up the import trade. This year's crop is almost ready, and the Jingoists in England desire it to be declared "absolute contraband". The growers here are wild, and are bringing pressure to bear on all their Congressmen. New Orleans and the South will feel the blow heavily if cotton is made contraband, and even English newspaper editors foresee the Anti-Ally feeling it will let loose.

The North is turning out millions and millions of dollars' worth of ammunition, but the Chicago packing interests are becoming increasingly anti-English as their products are held up. Copper, oil, and lumber interests—all very strong in the lobbies of Congress—are getting to the end of their patience. Bryan's secession from the Wilson Government has given courage to all these kickers, and, when Congress opens, they will demand the stoppage of all munition supplies to the Allies, until England accedes to an open sea and free market for all American exports.

If cotton is made absolute contraband by England, the South will be solid behind this demand.

The past month has marked a change in the Press here. All are lecturing England on freedom of the seas, etc. They are slowly developing a proper American outlook, as distinct from the pro-Ally sentiments hitherto indulged in.

Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labour, wants to drive Jim Larkin out of the country because he precipitated a big New York strike that held up the Allies' shipments of munitions and shot up wages. Gompers is a White-chapel Jew, and openly sides with England. Labour here is mainly controlled by Irish and Germans of the Larkin stamp, so Gompers will soon be smashed. He interfered in a strike at Bridgeport, Conn, at the plants turning out a ten-million dollar order for munitions for the Allies, and with the help of the English Consul-General settled it.

The Swedish and Swiss Governments have protested because their mails to and from their Consulates have been interfered with.

The Mexican factions are being supplied with ammunition through the Southern ports. New Orleans is the base of all revolutions in Latin-America. Chile is preparing for a revolution. It may break out daily.]

There are several recent arrivals from the old country here. "John Brennan" is in New York, working up Cumann na mBan. Colum and others are producing Irish plays. Larry de Lacy, late refugee from Enniscorthy, is now on the staff of the "Irish World." He has married a cailin from his own town, and has gone south on his honeymoon.

I hope there is a better understanding in Ireland between Nationalists and the labour men. Glad to see "Nationality" taking a fall out of the capitalists. Here in America one can get a better view of international affairs than at home. If the men at home keep their heads and steadily pursue their work, they will win out. I hope THE SPARK is doing well. It flashed out when there was no journal to dispell the darkness created by the English Government and their Irish allies. The Editor is to be congratulated for his courageous and well-written little paper.

There is no truth in the statement that Rossa recanted before he died. It was a deliberate lie circulated in the interests of England.



"HANDING OUT ALBANIA."

The war undertaken by England, Russia, and France in defence of Small Nations—Ireland, Egypt, the Transvaal, Poland, Finland, Georgia, Algiers, Morocco, and so forth, not forgetting to remember Belgium, has had many curious and instructive phases, but none more interesting than the one disclosed by the announcement in last Monday's London "Daily Mail" that as the price of Servia's cession of Macedonia to Bulgaria—a cession which the champions of Small Nations hope will bring Bulgaria into the war against Germany—Albania is to be partitioned by England, Russia, and France between Servia, Greece, and Italy—Italy getting the seaport of Valona, Greece Southern Albania and Servia Northern Albania—the first tripartite division of an ancient Nationality since the partition of Poland in the 18th century—for the partition of Ireland to be made by the Amending Act after the war is only to be a bi-partite division—Antrim, Armagh, Derry, Down, Fermanagh, and Tyrone going to Carson, and the rest of Ireland to the Four Hundred Pounders, in trust for the Empire.

Some 2,000 years before the British Empire was conceived the mighty Pelasgic people dwelt on what is now Greece and stretched along the Adriatic and the Ægean—a people akin in genius

and race to the Gael—an Homeric people. To them and to the Egyptians the Hellenes went to school, and settling on the fringe of Pelasgic territory and thereafter penetrating it, made the glory of Greece, surpassing in craft and arts their Pelasgic teachers, but carving their heroes and demigods in the Pelasgic image—for the manliest men of Homer are Pelasgic, the cunning and subtle like Ulysses are Greek. Backward of Greece and far across the Balkans towards the Sea of Marmora the manly Pelasgian long held sway until the great irruption of the barbarous Slavs challenged them. The fight between the Pelasgians and the eastern hordes was brave and stout, but the Slavs innumerable forced the Pelasgians back towards the Adriatic and founded on the territory they now had the semi-savage "empires" of Servia and Bulgaria.

Next came the Turk challenging Slav empires, and down went Serb and Bulgarian before him—down as deep as the Eastern Empire and gorgeous Byzantium had fallen before him. The Pelasgian faced the victorious Turk pressing on towards Rome by way of the Adriatic. George Castriot—the immortal Scanderbeg—led his countrymen to victory after victory against them. Twice he flung back the conqueror of Byzantium—the founder of the Turkish Empire, and for 25 years—until his death—the Pelasgians were free. He died and they were riven and overcome. A great people, a noble nationality was split into sections—"hating each other for the love of God" and equally tyrannised over by the Foreigner. And so for 400 years or more the history of the Pelasgians has been the history of a devoted people, a people split into warring camps of creed and clan, but yet retaining their Nationality. For out of the wreck and welter they have cherished to this day their language, their customs, and their traditions.

The Pelasgians are to-day called by Europe the Albanians, and the remnant of their once vast territory is styled Albania. It is a land of rocks and mountains with a noble coast stretching along the Adriatic Sea. Italy, Servia, and Greece all lust for that noble coast, and in the love of Christianity, civilisation, and the Small Nationalities they intend to get it.

Albania has never been conquered in the sense that its people have been subdued. Unlike the Serbs and Bulgars and Roumanians, the Albanians never lay prostrate at the feet of their conquerors. But from Scanderbeg's great day until some 40 years ago National unity was lacking. The Albanian League in 1880 nearly succeeded in forming a permanent union of the Tosk and the Gheg,

the Catholic and the Mahomedan Albanian, and although ultimately the League dissolved, still it bred a young Albanian spirit which has worked since then for the reconciling of all Albanians and the erection on the Adriatic of an independent and cohesive political Kingdom of Albania.

Servia, which the Albanians loathe and hate, is the prime enemy of Albania, upon the destruction of which that murderous kingdom hopes to build anew a Servian empire. Greece and Italy are also enemies, for they seek Albania's southern coast. In the recent Balkan War both Servia and Greece snatched some Albanian territory, and since then Italy, Servia, and Montenegro have pilfered—or tried to pilfer—more. Albania, however, managed to defend most of its possessions in the Balkan wars, and at the conclusion declared itself independent—to the chagrin of Italy, Greece, and Servia. Austria and Germany, however, saw to it that Albania's declaration of independence should be seriously treated, and in March, 1914, Prince William of Wied became Prince of Albania, and Albania was again a political nation. But her neighbours instigated internal troubles, and in the middle of them the great war for Civilisation, Christianity, and Small Nationalities broke out, and the young Prince of Albania resigned his crown that he might fight for Germany, his native land.

So stands Albania to-day, in a circle of enemies—Italians, Greeks, Servians, and Montenegrins. She is to be partitioned by England, Russia, and France between her enemies. Her very name is to be blotted out. So stands Albania, the new Poland of Europe. She is to be erased from the political map, that some of the Balkan States may be purchased to fight side by side with the champions of the Small Nationalities against the brutal Huns, who but a year and a-half ago gave Albania once again a nation's rank in Europe.

Some interesting reflections arise.

Albania is a Small Nationality—but she is not the kind of Small Nationalities the heroic Allies fight for.

Albania is not the property of the Allies, but in dividing it up between Italy, Greece, and Servia, the Allies are acting in the interests of Christianity and Civilisation.

Albania's political independence was acknowledged by England, Russia, France, Italy, Greece, and Servia in February, 1914. But in regard to the Sanctity of Treaties to uphold which these honourable Powers are at war, circumstances alter cases.

Nevertheless, since there are no John Redmonds

in Albania, a good many Servian throats and Greek heads will suffer at the hands of the Albanians before Albania is wiped out. In fact we may expect to hear of Horrible Albanian Atrocities on inoffensive people, who only wish to grab Albania at any cost.

There are only some 800,000 Albanians in Albania, and of these the Catholic Albanians live at the Servian end. They call the Servians "The enemies of God", since the Servians regard all Catholics with a Ballycastle eye. In due time, however, the Servians hope to make what they leave of them good Servian Christians.

This is the Great War for the Preservation of Small Nationalities and Religion. Please do not forget.

Defence of the Realm Act—Protest Committee.

A meeting of the above committee was held in the Library, 41 York Street, on Tuesday night, 24th inst., Mr. H. Dixon in the chair.

It was unanimously decided to hold a monster public meeting on Sunday, September 12th, at 4 o'clock p.m. in the Phoenix Park, to give the citizens of Dublin an opportunity of expressing their opinion on the most unwarranted summary prosecutions under the Defence of the Realm Act, and to call for the release of all persons imprisoned without proper trial.

VOL. I.

All orders for Vol. I. received up to August 25th shall have been fulfilled by the date of this issue. That is to say, the volumes *will have been entrusted to the Postal Authorities for delivery*. Applicants who do not receive *copies* in due course might please write me. Future orders will be dispatched by return post, or through such other channel as may be directed.

"SPARK" ADVERTISEMENTS.

Advertisements will be inserted here, *when space permits*, at 6d. per line prepaid. When not prepaid double price will be charged.

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BACK NUMBERS OF "SPARK"—From this date 1d. per copy will be charged for back numbers of The Spark.

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